
LAND USE ELEMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Scope and Role of the Land Use Element

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to correlate all land use issues into a set of coherent development policies for the private lands in the unincorporated area of the county. The goals, policies, and actions of the element relate directly to other elements and issues addressed in the General Plan. Although all general plan elements carry equal weight, the land use element is generally considered the most representative of the general plan, and in practice, is the most visible and often used element. Mono County's first Land Use Element was adopted in 1968 and last updated in 1993. This element supercedes and replaces the 1993 document.

The County's **Master Environmental Assessment (MEA)** summarizes existing land uses in the county, and outlines the plans, policies, and regulations currently affecting land use in the county. The Issues section of this element identifies and analyzes opportunities and constraints which influence the future development potential of the county's unincorporated areas. The Issues section first addresses countywide issues and then focuses on issues that are applicable to individual community areas in the county. The Policy section establishes directives to guide growth, development and use of land in the unincorporated area through the year 2020; it also addresses countywide policies as well as policies for specific community areas.

Legal Framework

Government Code § 65302(a) requires that the land use element designate the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of land use in the county for housing, business, industry, and open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of the land. In addition, the land use element is required to include standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the territory covered by the plan, and to identify areas subject to flooding and areas zoned for timberland production (TPZ lands).

Each required issue is addressed in this element, to the extent that it is relevant in this context. Otherwise it is discussed in other elements as follows:

- Distribution of housing, business, and industry. (See the Housing and Land Use Sections of the **MEA**.)
- Distribution of open space, including agricultural lands. (See the Land Use Section of the **MEA**.)
- Distribution of mineral resources and provisions for their continued availability. (See the Mineral Resources Section of the **MEA**, and the Conservation/Open Space Element, "Mineral Resource Policies.")
- Distribution of recreational facilities and opportunities. (See the Outdoor Recreation Section of the **MEA**, and the Conservation/Open Space Element, "Outdoor Recreation Policies.")

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- Location of education facilities. (See the Community Services and Facilities Section of the **MEA**.)
- Location of public buildings and grounds. (See the Community Services and Facilities Section of the **MEA**.)
- Location of future solid and liquid waste facilities. (See the Community Services and Facilities Section of the **MEA**, and the Mono County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan.)
- Identification of areas subject to flooding. (See the Flood Hazards Section of the **MEA**, and the Safety Element, "Flood Hazard Policies.")
- Identification of existing Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) lands. (Currently, there is no TPZ land designated in Mono County.)

Area Plans

In addition to the countywide Land Use Element, land use in community areas is governed by Area Plans. Area Plans further refine county general plan policies to address the needs of a particular community or area. An Area Plan must be internally consistent with the County General Plan, but need not address all of the general plan issues required by Government Code Section 65302, as long as the County General Plan satisfies those requirements.

Area Plans have been adopted for Benton, Hammil, Chalfant, Wheeler Crest, Long Valley, the Mammoth Lakes vicinity, and June Lake. Area Plans have been adopted for the following communities as part of the 1993 General Plan: Oasis, the Benton Hot Springs Valley, the Upper Owens Area, Mono Basin, Bodie Hills, Bridgeport, Swauger Creek/Devil's Gate, and Antelope Valley. Those policies are included in this land use element, along with updated policies for the areas with adopted Area Plans. General environmental information for the Area Plans is contained in the County's **MEA**.

Specific Plans

Specific Plans are intended to function as implementation mechanisms for the General Plan and as a standard-setting mechanism for detailed land use designation, subdivisions, and use permits. A specific plan must be consistent with the General Plan and, once adopted, becomes a part of the General Plan. Mono County currently has a number of adopted Specific Plans: the Conway Ranch development in Mono Basin, Lakeridge Ranch in Crowley Lake/Hilton Creek, Arcularius Ranch in the Upper Owens Area, and the Tioga Lodge in Lee Vining. The land use policies for some of these documents are summarized in this element.

Airport Land Use Plans

Land use in the area adjacent to public airports is governed by Airport Land Use Plans (ALUPs). An Airport Land Use Plan was adopted in 1986 by the Airport Land Use Commission for the Mammoth Lakes Airport (renamed Mammoth/Yosemite Airport). As part of the current General Plan update, Airport Land Use Plans have been developed

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for the Lee Vining and Bridgeport (Bryant Field) airports. Land use policies for each of the airports are included in this element.